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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 KABUL 000576

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [AF](#) [PREL](#)

SUBJECT: INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY HOPEFUL FOR SOLUTION TO
ECC OBSERVER PROBLEM

REF: KABUL0335

Classified By: Acting Deputy Ambassador Joseph Mussomeli for reasons 1.
4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) Summary: After his cabinet approved on a decree that would strip the Electoral Complaints Commission (ECC) of all foreign observers, President Karzai is considering UN SRSG's request to allow for two international observers (septel) to be appointed to the ECC, UN SRSG reported to a gathering of ambassadors in Kabul on February 15. Eide said that he has asked Karzai to consider restoring spots for two international observers, a reduction from the current three, and to allow them veto power. Eide also mentioned that he has received feedback from some donor countries on his proposal to restructure UNAMA, and requested all interested countries submit their final feedback within the next week. End Summary.

UN to Lead on ECC

¶2. (C) There was general consensus among the ambassadors gathered that the UN should take the lead on working with Karzai to find a solution to the ECC problem. Eide and French Ambassador Jean D'Amecourt both urged international counterparts not to "gang up" on Karzai, but to let Eide work on getting Karzai to accept some international participation on the ECC. The British ambassador noted that Karzai's apparent move to nationalize the ECC was in direct conflict with the promises he made at January's London Conference to promote electoral reform, but also said that he did not think this was the time for the international community to make public statements opposing Karzai's actions. Eide said that his team would carefully review the decree that Karzai's cabinet has approved and report back on any other significant changes it makes to the electoral law.

UNAMA Restructuring

¶3. (C) Eide reiterated his request that the international community, and key donors in particular, offer him their views on his plan to restructure UNAMA. He asked whether donors were prepared to discuss the plan, but quickly deferred holding a formal discussion on the issue to a future meeting (his successor Steffan de Mistura arrives o/a March 8). Referring to some of the feedback he has already received, Eide said that most respondents expressed concerns about the number of senior advisors he has proposed (twenty) and how they would interact with ministries and their home embassies. He said he thought it was unlikely the plan would yield more than six to ten senior advisors. He dismissed concerns about how the new advisors would change the architecture of UNAMA, emphasizing that all of that would be

worked out when the advisors arrive.

¶4. (C) Ambassador Mussomeli said that there were many in the U.S. government whose very concern was the proposed architecture of UNAMA, and especially how the new structure would impact our work with the ministries, and particularly our capacity building efforts within the ministries. Eide replied that he is "sober" about the likelihood that he will receive more than a handful of qualified applicants for the positions, and that it was very unlikely the full complement of twenty advisory positions would be filled. The French ambassador endorsed Eide's plan, saying that the UN should take the lead and be the face of the international community when working with the ministries. The influence of the advisors would be enhanced because they would represent the entire international community, and not just one country.

¶5. (C) NATO Senior Civilian Representative Mark Sedwill said that a parallel problem is developing over how to coordinate our efforts at the local and PRT level. As areas become more stable and the PRT structure evolves, the international community needs to develop a way to sustain the level of development aid that is currently distributed and to ensure that stable areas are also given a commensurate amount of aid and support.

¶6. (C) Sedwill's concerns were echoed by Ali Mawji, the representative from the Aga Khan Foundation, who said that we will have "lost the plot" if we focus solely on national policy at the expense of determining how we can apply these policies to the local level. The lack of a strong plan for provincial development has caused huge problems, he said.

KABUL 00000576 002 OF 002

Eide asserted that the PRT model has become "rusty" and that it needs to evolve.

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